

Message Text

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20

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 OMB-01 AID-20 DRC-01 /114 W

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R 221145Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 467

INFO AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMCONSUL SURABAYA

AMCONSUL MEDER

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L JAKARTA 0919

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT IDRU

SUBJ: SUHARTO DENIES WIFE'S INVOLVEMENT IN FOUR BUSINESS

FIRMS AND LECTURES EDITORS.

REF: JAKARTA 0920

1. SWEMARY: IN MEETING WITH EDITORS AND JOURNALISTS
ASSOCIATION (PWI) LEADERS JANUARY 22, PRESIDENT
SUHARTO DENIED CHARGES THAT HIS WIK OR OTHER FAMILY
MEMBERS ARE LINKED TO FOUR LARGE INDONESIAN BUSINESS
ENTERPRISES. HE ALSO EXPLAINED GOI'S NEW "PREVENTIVE"
PRESS POLICY FOLLOWING JAKARTA RIOTS UNDER WHICH SEVEN
PUBLICATIONS HAVE BEEN SHUT DOWN. SUHARTO'S EXTRAORDINARY
DISCLAMER CENERNING FAMILY'S BUSINESS DEALS WILL
CONVINCE FEW, BUT HIS LECTURE TO EDITORS IS FURTHER
SIGN THAT CRITICAL PRESS REPORTING WILL NO LONGER BE
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PERMITTED FOLLOWING BASED ON PRESS REPORTS JANUARY 22.

2. SUHARTO SUMMONED OFFICIALS OF INDONESIAN JOURNALISTS ASSOCIATION TO HIS OFFICE JANUARY 21 TO DENY RUMORS THAT MADAME SUHARTO OR OTHER MEMBERS OF HIS FAMILY ARE ASSOCIATED WITH PT ASTRA, PT BOGASARI, PT BATIK KRIS AND PT HOTEL SAID. (CRITICS HAVE FREQUENTLY LINKED MRS SUHARTO WITH THESE LARGE AND WEALTHY FIRMS.) INCLUDED AMONG JOURNALISTS ASSOCIATION OFFICIALS WERE EDITORS ROSIHAN ANWAR (PEDOMAN); B M DIAH(MERDEKA); JACOB OETAMA (KOMPAS) AND ASSMAIATION CHAIRMAN HARMOKO (POS KOTA), ALL OF WHOM ARE EDITORS OF INDEPENDENT DAILIES STILL BEING PUBLISHED FOLLOWING GOVERNMENT SHUT-DOWN OF SEVEN PUBLICATIONS AFTER LAST WEEK'S RIOTS (REFTEL). ALSO PRESENT AT MEETING WERE ATTORNEY GENERAL ALI SAID MINISTER OF INFORMATION MASHURI AND DIRECTORS OF THE FOUR BUSINESS FIRMS. PRESIDENT REPORTEDLY ASKED EDITORS AND ATTORNEY GENERAL TO QUESTION BUSINESSMEN DIRECTLY ABOUT ALLEGED SUHARTO FAMILY INVOLVEMENT IN THEIR BUSINESS.

3. SUHARTO ALSO LEXPLAINED GOVERNMENT'S "PREVENTIVE MEASURES" TO ASSURE RESPONSIBLE PRESS REPORTING (UNDER WHICH SEVEN NEWSPAPERS AND PUBLICATIONS HAVE BEEN CLOSED DURING PAST WEEK). HE ASKED EDITORS TO UPGRADE JOURNALISTS REPORTING AND CAREFULLY CHECK ACCURACY OF REPORTS BEFORE PUBLICATION.

4. TODAY'S PEDOMAN CARRIED FRONT-PAGE NOTICE EXPRESSING "REGRET" THAT IS JANUARY 12 EDITION REPORTED THAT STUDENTS HAS QUESTIONED SUHARTO DURING MEETING JANUARY 11 ABOUT MRS SUHARTO'S BUSINESS CONNECTIONS. EXPLANATORY EDITORIAL SAID REPORT OF STUDENT'S QUESTION WAS INCOREECT, NOTED PRESIDENT'S DENIAL OF SUHARTO FAMILY INVOLVEMENT IN THE FOUR FIRMS, AND REPORTED THAT EDITOR ROSIHAN ANWAR HAS APOLOGIZED TO SUHARTO FOR ERROR. EDITORIAL ALSO NOTED THAT PRESS LEADERS WHO ATTENDED MEETING WITH SUHARTO ACKNOWLEDGED SHORTCOMINGS OF INDONESIAN JOURNALISTS AND URGED THM TO GUARD AGAINST REPORTS ABOUT PRESIDENT'S FAMILY THAT DAMAGE IMAGE AND IMPUGN INTEGRITY OF CHIEF OF STATE.

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5. COMMENT: NEXT TO ACTIVITIES OF ASPRIS, IBU TIEN'S BUSINESS DEALINGS ARE MAJOR TARGET OF SUHARTO'S CRITICS. PRESIDENT'S EXTRAORDINARY DENIAL OF HER'S AND OTHER RELATIVES' INVOLVEMENT IN PARTICULAR FIRMS, WHETHER OR NOT TRUE, WILL PERSUADE FEW THAT SHE AND OTHER FIRST FAMILY MEMBERS ARE NOT HEAVILY INVOLVED IN SHADY DEALS AND INFLUENCE PEDDLING. IN ANY CASE,

SUHARTO'S MEETING WITH JOURNALISTS ASSOCIATION IS
FURTHER EVIDENCE THAT GOVERNMENT WILL NOT TOLERATE
CRITICAL REPORTING BY THE FEW INDEPENDENT PAPERS THAT
HAVE SURVIVED PRESS PURGE DESCRIBED IN REFTEL.
GALBRAITH

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